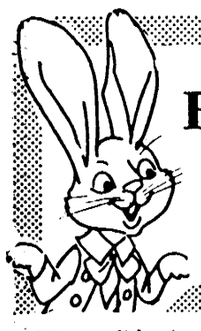

Rabbit Tracks

by John Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help.)

This can't be August. In August you never have to mow the lawn once a week.

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The summer doldrums are here. The boob tube has nothing but reruns and the fun went out of watching the Tigers when they blew it all against Boston.

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Restaurant report: In Boyne City there is Number 1 Water Street, in Harbor Springs, The Pier, and in Bay View (just east of Petoskey), the Bay View Inn.

All are run by the Staffords and all serve fine meals. (The Caesar's salad is excellent.) The best of the bunch is the Sunday brunch at the Bay View Inn overlooking Little Traverse Bay. It costs $11 for adults and is worth it. There is no booze at the Inn, but I understand you can bring your own if you must. The other 2 restaurants offer liquor.

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Next February the Chronicle will be running a special historical picture review. One of the features in it will be (with your help) pictures of old-time schools. The numerous now extinct country schools as well as the various high schools that served Cass City are needed. Any old time pictures will be considered. All will be returned.

****

It wasn't too long ago that nearly all the banks issuing Visa and Master Charge cards charged an annual fee. Now that interest rates have plunged the shoe is on the other foot.

Monday morning the Haires received an invitation from a California bank to use its Visa card and will pay us one percent of any purchases we make to do so.

TAMMY ISELER (left) and Tracy Grindey are presented $750 Cass City Lions Club scholarship grants by John Maharg.

Iseler and Grindey receive Lions Club scholarships

Tammy Iseler, 18, who earned a 4-point perfect grade average at Cass City High School, and Tracy Grindey, who had a 3.165 point average, were recipients of $750 scholarship aid grants presented by the Cass City Lions Club.

Tammy, daughter of Dale and Kathy Iseler, 5089 Schwegler Road, plans to attend Washington University at St. Louis, MO, and major in business administration, starting this fall.

Tracy, daughter of Mike and Norma Bigelow, 6742 Pine Street, plans to attend Central Michigan University, where she will major in math. Both Tammy and Tracy have won other scholarship grants which will help pay costs of their college educations.

John Maharg, of the Lions Club, said the scholarship presentation is the 8th for the Lions since its inception.

"We're trying to expand our aid to top scholars through the club program. We originally offered just one scholarship, that amounting to $250. But each year it gets bigger and we awarded two grants this year for the first time."

The club pays for the scholarship grants from fund-raising activities and donations, Maharg said.

Business slow in Novesta

There was little action at the monthly meeting of Novesta Township, according to clerk Nursie Kloc.

She said they paid some bills which included paying the road commission a little over $21,000 for the paving of 2 miles of Severance Road.

At the July meeting Keith Little approached the board suggesting that the land where the Novesta Church of Christ was formerly located be donated to the township if the township helped with clean-up costs. Kloc explained that the church land has been cleaned up and that it was not legal for the township to enter into Little's suggested arrangement. She said that the next step is for Little to present a petition to the board calling for a special meeting for the purpose of discussion and a decision about the township purchasing the land on which the old church was located.

Money taken in break-in

The Pizza Villa in Cass City was broken into sometime between 10-10:30 Sunday, Aug. 3, and 6 a.m. Monday morning, Aug. 4, according to the Cass City police.

Carol Furness, manager, told police that $128 was taken from the money drawer. The incident is under investigation.

The Haire Net

Professional baseball at the major league level is riding a wave of popularity that's greater than at any other time in history. It's a lead pipe cinch to remain so as long as my generation is around to enjoy it.

Long term you have to wonder if it will remain on top in fan appeal. If you discard the interest in the major leagues, baseball has been losing out for the last 40 years.

There was a time, you know, when baseball was played in every town and 4 corners in the country. Watching the town's team on a Sunday afternoon was as much a part of our culture as a back yard barbecue is today.

Making the high school baseball team was a badge of honor and many schools had baseball teams, but did not play football or track at all.

From the semi-pro town teams the best players joined one of the thriving minor leagues and how he did was closely watched by all who knew him.

Contrast that with today when just about the only baseball played is in high school, in minor leagues, at colleges and the various kids' leagues.

In high school and colleges there's really not that much interest in the game. Even without a gate admission, about all you'll find watching are a few diehards and relatives and friends of the players.

If baseball does remain popular, it's the Little, Pony and Babe Ruth leagues that will do it. While the great majority of the players on these teams will drop out of baseball before they enter high school, they learn the basics of the game. They know enough to appreciate a good play when they see it.

Because baseball is as American as apple pie, most dads take little Johnny to see a major league game. When Johnny has kids of his own, he remembers and wants the same experience for his Little Leaguer. Baseball lives on nostalgia.

Why it should be important if a team of paid athletes from all over the country should win or lose is hard to explain.

As a dyed-in-the-wool Tiger fan, I rejoice when they win and worry when they lose. I do it even though I know that it really doesn't make any difference at all. The sun would still rise in the east if another baseball game were never played.

Really, the major league owners do very little to see that the game continues as it is today. Just as corporations invest in research, it seems awfully shortsighted that teams won't spend a few more bucks to keep baseball alive at the Little League level. If it falls away there as it has everywhere else, what remains? Nothing that matters.

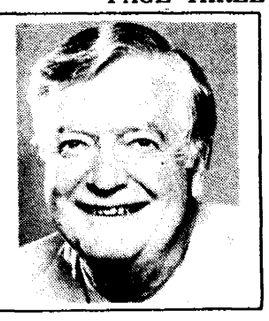
That would be too bad, too. A day at a baseball game is a wonderful way to spend some time with the family.

According to some researchers, celery has negative calories. It takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it to begin with.

"If It Fitz..."

I didn't know his name

By Jim Fitzgerald



A few months ago, a woman on the elevator asked me to tell my wife that Edward died. I didn't want to ask "Edward who?"

The big difference between living in an ordinary house and a high-rise apartment building is the elevators. Probably 800 people live in our building. During the past 10 years, I've seen most of them on the elevator, but usually I don't know their names.

The faces are familiar; we usually say "hello" and maybe chat about the weather. But we don't know anything about each other. We don't know if we'll meet again on the elevator later that day, or not see each other for a year. Our contact is controlled solely by the chance push of an elevator button.

Two weeks ago I wrote about going down the Giant Slide on Belle Isle with granddaughter Emily. A few days later, a man on the elevator said he owns the Giant Slide. I've seen him on the elevator many times, for many years, but had no idea he was connected with that fearful slide. Giant Slide ownership is not a subject that often comes up in ordinary elevator conversation.

Now I'm eager for him to get on the same elevator with Emily and me so I can impress her by introducing him as the owner of the slide that scared the devil out of grandpa. It could happen next week, but with four elevators, 28 floors and 300 apartments, the odds are against it. It might not happen until 1988. By then, I hope I still remember his name is John Howell.

I didn't remember who Edward was, but my wife did. She cried when I gave her the elevator message that he was dead. Edward was a rather large dog of indeterminate heritage. We'd both seen him on the elevator many times, always with the man who owned him.

My wife always gushed over Edward, which isn't unusual for her. She gushes over all children, plants and animals except snakes. She touches them and says dopey things. I've always said it will serve her right when an Airedale bites off her finger, but it's never happened, even when I said, "Sic her, boy, sic her."

I used to think it was dumb for high-rise residents to own dogs. I'd watch them take their mutts down the elevator to sniff trees at midnight in zero weather, and I'd snicker at their foolishness. But I soon came to understand how much the companionship of these pets must mean to the people they lived with, and my thinking became more charitable. To each his own.

So I also felt bad when I realized Edward was the big dog with the nice man. That's how my wife and I always referred to Edward's master — "that nice man." We could never remember his name, but we always remembered how nice he was. He always smiled and said something friendly.

Sometimes the nice man would get on the elevator when I was with a grandchild. He invariably said something nice to them. He was older than I, but I never asked him if he had grandchildren of his own. He knew I wrote for a newspaper, but I never asked what he did, or if he were retired.

Once in a while, through the years, my wife or I would make a special effort to learn the nice man's name. But then he wouldn't share our elevator for months, and by the time we finally saw him again, the name was forgotten again.

I never got a chance to tell the nice man I was sorry about the death of Edward. And now I'm much sorrier, because, last week, the nice man died.

From his one-paragraph obituary, I learned more than from living in the same building with him for 10 years. His name was W. Allistair Sinclair. His friends probably called him Al. Survivors include his wife, a daughter, four grandchildren and one great-grandson.

That's life in a high-rise, where you never know who's there until the elevator door opens. He was such a nice man, but I never called him Al. He had a great-grandson and I didn't even know it. That makes me cry.

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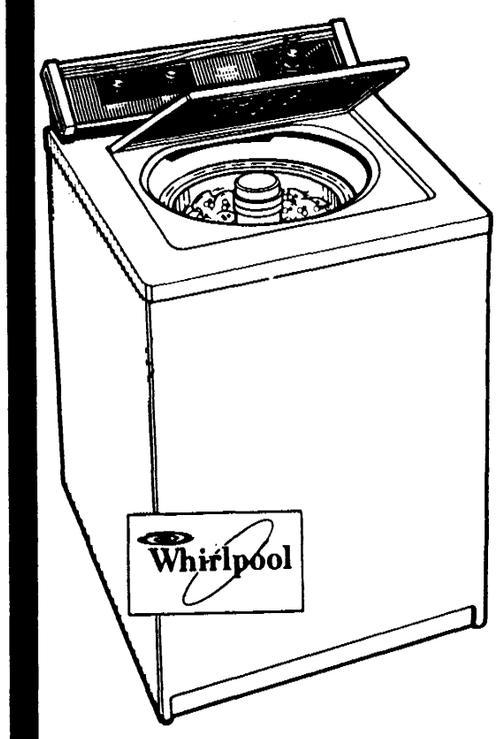

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